Bryan Assails British Rule

Injustice and Cruelty, He Declares, Mark England's Course in India—He Studies Her Colonial System and Finds It Wanting.

BY WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN.

"What is truth?" asked Pilate, and when he asked the question he went out without waiting for an answer. The question has been asked many times and answered in many different ways. I was reminded of a similar question when I read over the door of a court house in Aligarh, India, the motto, "Justice is the strength of the British Empire."

No empire, no Government, no society can have any other source of permanent strength. Lord Salisbury is quoted by Indian leaders as saying, "Injustice will bring down the mightiest to ruin," and we all believe it. Wendell Phillips expressed it as strongly and even more beautifully (I quote from memory): "You may build your capitals until they reach the skies, but if they rest upon injustice, the pulse of a woman will beat them down."

But what is justice? How varied are the answers given! The subject, in the name of justice, presents his appeal to his king, and the sovereign, if he be a despot, may send him to exile or the prison or the block and do it in the name of justice.

What is justice? This question has been ringing in my ears during our journey through India.

When I was a law student, I read the speech of Sheridan at the trial of Warren Hastings, and that masterpiece of invective was recalled sixteen years later, when a colonial policy began to be suggested in the United States after the taking of Manila, and I tried to inform myself in regard to British rule in India.

The more I read about it, the more unjust it seemed. So many Americans have, however, during the last few years, spoken admirably of England's colonial system that I have looked forward to the visit to India with increasing interest because of the opportunity it would give me to study at close range a question of vital importance to our country.

I have met some of the leading English officials, as well as a number in subordinate positions; have talked with educated Indians—Hindus, Mohammedans and Parsees; have seen the people, rich and poor, in the cities and in the country, and have examined statistics and read speeches, reports, petitions and other literature that does not find its way to the United States; and British rule in India is far worse, far more burdensome to the people, and far more unjust—if I understand the meaning of the word—than I had supposed.

When I say this I do not mean to bring an indictment against the English people or to assert that they are guilty of international wrongdoing. Neither do I mean to question the motives of those in authority.

GOOD MEN IN OFFICE—BUT.

It has been my good fortune to become personally acquainted with Lord Minto, the present Viceroy; with Lieut.-Gov. Frazier, the chief executive of the province of Bengal; with Lieut.-Gov. La Touche, chief executive of the united provinces of Agra and Oudh, and with Gov. Lamington, chief executive of the Bombay presidency, three of the largest Indian States. These men I am sure represent the highest type of their countrymen.

Lord Minto is fresh from Canada, where he was Governor-General; Gov. Lamington was the head of the Australian Government before coming to India, and both Gov. Frazier and Gov. La Touche have long official experience to their credit. That they will be just, as they understand justice, and do right, as they see the right, I am satisfied; but what is justice?

The trouble is that England acquired India for England's advantage, not for India's, and that she holds India for England's benefit, not for India's. She administers India with an eye to England's interests, not India's, and she passes upon every question as a Judge would were he permitted to decide his own case.

The officials in India owe their appointment directly or indirectly to the home Government, and the home Government holds authority at the sufferance of the people of England, not of the people of India. The officials who go out from England to serve a certain time, and then return, whose interests are in England, rather than in India, and whose sympathies are naturally with the British rather than with the natives, cannot be expected to view questions from the same standpoint as the Indians. Neither can these officials be expected to know the needs of the people as well as those who share their daily life and aspirations.

COMPANY RULE AND NATIONAL RULE.

It is not necessary to review the earlier rule under the East India Company; that is sufficiently condemned by public record. The company was chartered for commercial purposes, and its rule had no other than a pecuniary aim. It secured control of State after State by helping one native prince against another where it did not actually instigate war between princes.

The English Government finally took the colony over, confessedly because of the outrageous conduct of the company's officials. No one now defends the rule of the East India Company, although Warren Hastings was finally acquitted by the House of Lords in spite of his crimes, out of consideration for his public service in extending English authority.

Is English rule in India just, as we find it to-day? Fortunately England permits free speech in England, although she has sometimes restricted it in her colonies, and there has not been a public question under consideration in England for a century which has not brought out independent opinion.

It is the glory of England that she was an early champion of freedom of speech, and it is the glory of Englishmen that they criticise their own Government when they think it wrong. During the American Revolution Burke thundered his defence of the rights of the colonists, and Walpole warned his countrymen that they could not destroy American liberty without asserting principles which, if carried out, would destroy English liberty as well.

ENGLAND CONDEMNED BY ENGLISHMEN.

During the recent war in South Africa the British had no more severe critics than were to be found among her own people and in her own Parliament. To-day British rule in India is as forcibly arraigned by Englishmen as by the Indians themselves.

While Mr. Naoroji, an Indian, goes to England and secures from a meeting of a radical club the adoption of a resolution reciting that as "Britain has appropriated thousands of millions of India's wealth for building up and maintaining her British Indian empire and for drawing directly vast wealth to herself"; that as "she is continuing to drain about £30,000,000 of India's wealth every year unceasingly in a variety of ways," and that as "she has thereby reduced the bulk of the Indian population to extreme poverty, destitution and degradation; it is, therefore, her bounden duty in common justice and humanity to pay from her own exchequer the costs of all famines and diseases caused by such improverishment"; and further, "that it is most humiliating and discreditable to the British name that other countries should be appealed to or should have to come to Britain's help for relief of Britain's own subjects, and after and by her un-British rule of about 150 years"—while, I repeat, Mr. Naoroji was securing the unanimous adoption of the above resolution in England, Sir Henry Cotton, now a member of Parliament, but for thirty-five years a member of the Indian civil service, was preparing his book, "New India," in which he courageously points out the injustice from which India now suffers.

Neither he nor Mr. Naoroji suggests Indian independence. Both believe that English sovereignty should continue, but Mr. Cotton shows the wrongs now inflicted upon India and the necessity for reform.

PROMISES DELIBERATELY BROKEN.

Not only does he charge that the promises of the Queen have been ignored, and Indians excluded from service for which they were fitted, but he charges that the antagonism between the officials and the people is growing and that there is among civilian magistrates "an undoubted tendency to inflict severe sentences when natives of India are concerned, and to impose light and sometimes inadequate punishment upon offenders of their own race," and that in trials "in which Englishmen are tried by English juries" the result is sometimes "a failure of justice not falling short of judicial scandal."

If justice cannot be found in the courts, where shall she be sought?

After the Indian Mutiny the Queen in a proclamation promised that natives should be freely and impartially admitted to offices, "the duties of which they might be qualified by their education, ability and integrity to discharge." Lord Lytton, a Viceroy of India, in a confidential document which got into print, speaking of the pledges of the sovereign and the Parliament of England, said:

"We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them [the natives of India] and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straightforward course."

And again:

"Since I am writing confidentially, I do not hesitate to say that both the Governments of England and of India appear to me, up to the present moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear."

WORSE THAN RUSSIAN DESPOTISM.

The government of India is as arbitrary and despotic as the government of Russia ever was, and in two respects it is worse. First, it is administered by an alien people, whereas the officials of Russia are Russians. Secondly, it drains a large part of the taxes out of the country, whereas the Russian Government spends at home the money which it collects from the people.

A third disadvantage might be named, since the Czar has already created a legislative body, whereas England continues to deny to the Indians any form of representative or constitutional government.

The people of India are taxed, but they have no voice in the amount to be collected or in the use to be made of the revenue. They pay into the Government nearly $225,000,000 a year, and of this nearly $100,000,000 is expended upon an army in which Indians cannot be officers.

It is not necessary to keep such an army merely to hold the people in subjection if the Indians are really satisfied with English rule, and if the army is intended to keep Russia from taking India, as is sometimes claimed, why should not the British Government bear a part of the burden? Would it not be wiser so to attach the Indian people to the British Government that they would themselves resist annexation to Russia?

The home charges, as they are called, absorb practically one-third of the entire revenues. About $100,000,000 goes out of India to England every year; more than $15,000,000 is paid to European officials in the civil employ. What nation could stand such a drain without impoverishment?

Taxation is nearly twice as heavy in India as in England in proportion to the income of the people. Compared with the people of other countries, the Indian's income is on the average one-twentieth of the average English income, one-seventh of the average Spaniard's income, one-sixth of the average Italian's income, one-fifth of the (European) Russian's income and one-half the income of the Turk.

Sir Henry Cotton shows that the average per capita deposit in banks in England is $100, while the average per capita deposit in India is 50 cents; but how can the Indian be expected to have a large bank account when the average yearly income is $10?

THE SILVER QUESTION.

I have, in another article, referred to the jewelry worn by Indian women. The bracelets and anklets are silver, except among the poorest, and this was formerly a form of hoarding, but the suspension of the coinage of silver deprived the people of the privilege of converting this hoarded silver into rupees.

It will be remembered that the late Senator Wolcott, a member of the monetary commission appointed by President McKinley in 1897, on his return from Europe declared that the suspension of the coinage of silver in India had reduced the value of the savings of the people to the amount of $500,000,000. The suspension was carried out for the benefit of European interests regardless of the welfare of the masses.

DEATH RATE RISING.

So great has been the drain, the injustice to the people and the tax upon the resources of the country that famines have increased in frequency and severity. Mr. Gokhale, one of the ablest of India's public men, presided over the meeting of the last Indian national congress held in December and declared in his opening speech that the death rate had steadily risen from 24 to the 1,000 in 1882-84 to 30 in 1892-94 and to 34 at the present time.

I have more than once within the last month heard the plague referred to as a providential remedy for over population. Think of it! British rule justified because "it keeps the people from killing each other," and the plague praised because it removes those whom the Government has saved from slaughter!

The railroads, with all their advantages, have been charged with adding to the weight of famine by carrying away the surplus grain in good years, leaving no residue for the years of drought. While grain can now be carried back more easily in times of scarcity, the people are too poor to buy it with two freights added. The storage of grain by the Government at central points until the new crop is safe would bring some relief, but it has not been attempted.

If it is argued that the railroads have raised the price of grain in the interior by furnishing a cheaper outlet to the sea, it must be remembered that the benefit has accrued not to the people, nearly all of whom are tenants, but to the landlords, the Government being the largest holder.

MONEY FOR AN ARMY, NONE FOR IRRIGATION.

Not only are the people being impoverished but the land is being worn out. Manure, which ought to be used to renew the fields, is consumed as fuel, and no sight is more common in India than that of women and children gathering manure from the roads with their hands. This, when mixed with straw and sun dried, is used in the place of wood, and from the amount of it carried in baskets it must be a chief article of merchandise.

There are now large tracts of useless land that might be brought under cultivation if the irrigation system were extended. Proof of this is to be found in the fact that the Government of India has already approved of extensions which, when made, will protect 7,000,000 acres and irrigate 3,000,000 acres.

The estimated cost of these extensions is about $45,000,000 and the plans are to be carried out "as funds can be provided." Ten per cent. of the army expenditure applied to irrigation would complete the system within five years, but instead of military expenses being reduced, the army appropriation was increased more than $10,000,000 between 1904 and 1905.

Of the total amount raised from taxation each year about 40 per cent. is raised from land, and the rate is so heavy that the people cannot save enough when the crops are good to feed themselves when the crops are bad. More than 10 per cent. of the total tax is collected on salt, which now pays about five-eighths of a cent a pound.

This is not only a heavy rate, when compared with the original cost of the salt, but it is especially burdensome to the poor. The salt tax has been as high as one cent a pound, and when at that rate materially reduced the amount of salt consumed by the people.

The poverty of the people of India is distressing in the extreme; millions live on the verge of starvation all the time, and one would think that their very appearance would plead successfully in their behalf.

WHY NOT SELF GOVERNMENT?

The economic wrong done to the people of India explains the political wrong done to them. For more than twenty years an Indian national congress has been pleading for a modified form of representative government—not for a severing of the tie that binds India to Great Britain, but for an increased voice in their local affairs.

This request cannot be granted. Why? Because a local government, composed of natives selected by the people, would protest against so large an army, reduce the taxes and put Indians at lower salaries into places now held by Europeans.

It is the fear of what an Indian local government would do that prevents the experiment, although two other reasons, both insufficient, are given. One of these is that the Indian people are not intelligent enough and that they must be protected from themselves by denying them a voice in their own affairs. The other is that the Indians are so divided into tribes and religious sects that they cannot act harmoniously.

The first argument will not impress any unprejudiced traveller who has come into contact with the educated classes. There are enough informed, college trained men in India, not to speak of those who, like our own ancestors a few centuries ago, have practical sense and good judgment without book learning to guide public opinion.

BRITISH ARGUMENTS ANSWERED.

While the percentage of literacy is deplorably small, the total number of educated men is really considerable, and there are at this time 17,000 students above the secondary schools and studying for the B. A. degree. There is not a district of any considerable size that has not some intelligent men in it, and these could be relied upon to direct the government until a larger number are qualified to assist.

It is true that native princes have often seemed indifferent to the welfare of their subjects—princes who have lived in great luxury while the people have been neglected—but to-day some of the native States vie with those controlled by European officials in education and material advancement. Is not the very fact that the people are left under the government of native princes in the native States conclusive proof that in all the States the government could be administered without the aid of so large a number of Europeans?

The second argument is equally unsound. To say that the Indians would necessarily fight among themselves is to ignore the progress of the world.

There was a time when Europe was the scene of bloody religious wars, and our country is indebted to the persecution of the Pilgrims in England for some of its best pioneers. There has been a growth in religious tolerance during the last century, and this is as noticeable in India as elsewhere.

Already the intellectual leaders of all the sects and elements of the Indian population are mingling in congresses, conferences and public meetings. Already a national spirit is growing which, like the national spirit in England and America, disregards religious lines and emphasizes more and more the broad social needs which are common to all; and with the increase of general education there will be still more unity and national sentiment.

Those who make this argument also forget that as long as England maintains sovereignty it will be impossible for religious differences to lead to war, and that differences in council and in congress would strengthen rather than weaken her position.

NATIVES EXCLUDED FROM OFFICE.

Why is there lack of intelligence among the Indians? Have they not had the blessings of British rule for several generations? Why have they not been fitted for self government?

Gladstone, whose greatness of head and heart shed a lustre upon all Europe, said: "It is liberty alone which fits men for liberty. This proposition, like every other in politics, has its bounds, but it is far safer than the counter doctrine, wait till they are fit."

How long will it take to fit the Indians for self government when they are denied the benefits of experience? They are excluded from the higher civil service (ostensibly open to them) by cunningly devised systems of examinations which make it impossible for them to enter.

Not only are the people thus robbed of opportunities which rightfully belong to them, but the country is deprived of the accumulated wisdom that would come with service, for the alien officials return to Europe at the end of their service, carrying back their wisdom and earnings, not to speak of the pensions which they then begin to draw.

AT A STANDSTILL UNDER BRITISH RULE.

The illiteracy of the Indian people is a disgrace to the proud nation which for a century and a half has controlled their destiny. The editor of the *Indian World*, a Calcutta magazine, says in last February's number:

"If India has not yet been fit for free institutions, it is certainly not her fault. If, after one and a half centuries of British rule, India remains where she was in the Middle Ages, what a sad commentary must it be upon the civilizing influences of that rule!

"When the English came to India this country was the leader of Asiatic civilization and the undisputed centre of light in the Asiatic world. Japan was nowhere.

"Now, in fifty years, Japan has revolutionized her history with the aid of modern arts of progress, and India, with 150 years of English rule, is still condemned to tutelage."

Who will answer the argument presented by this Indian editor? And he might have made it stronger.

Japan, the arbiter of her own destiny and the guardian of her own people, has in half a century bounded from illiteracy to a position where 90 per cent. of her people can read and write and is now thought worthy to enter into an Anglo-Japanese alliance; while India, condemned to political servitude and sacrificed for the commercial advantage of another nation, still sits in darkness, less than 1 per cent. of her women able to read and write, and less than 10 per cent. of her total population sufficiently advanced to communicate with each other by letter or to gather knowledge from the printed page.

ILLITERACY DESPITE HIGH TAXES.

In the speech above referred to, Mr. Gokhale estimates that four villages out of every five are without a schoolhouse, and this, too, in a country where the people stagger under an enormous burden of taxation. The published statement for 1904-05 shows that the general Government appropriated but $6,500,000 for education, while more than $90,000,000 were appropriated for "army services," and the revised estimate for the next year shows an increase of a little more than $500,000 for education, while the army received an increase of more than $12,000,000.

The Government has, it is true, built a number of colleges (with money raised by taxation), and it is gradually extending the system of primary and secondary schools (also with taxes), but the progress is exceedingly slow and the number of schools grossly inadequate. Benevolent Englishmen have also aided the cause of education by establishing private schools and colleges under Church and other control, but the amount returned to India in this way is insignificant when compared with the amount annually drawn by England from India.

It is not scarcity of money that delays the spread of education in India, but the deliberate misappropriation of taxes collected, and the system which permits this disregard of the welfare of the subjects, and the subordination of their industries to the supposed advancement of another nation's trade is as indefensible upon political and economic grounds as upon moral grounds.

NATIONAL SPIRIT AWAKENING.

If more attention were given to the intellectual progress of the people and more regard shown for their wishes, it would not require many soldiers to compel loyalty to England; neither would it require a large army to preserve peace and order.

If agriculture were protected and encouraged and native industries built up and diversified, England's commerce with India would be greater, for prosperous people would buy more than can be sold to India to-day, when so many of her sons and daughters are like walking shadows.

Lord Curzon, the most brilliant of India's viceroys of recent years, inaugurated a policy of reaction. He not only divided Bengal with a view to lessening the political influence of the great province, but he adopted an educational system which the Indians believe was intended to discourage higher education among the native population.

The result, however, was exactly the opposite of that which was intended. It aroused the Indians and made them conscious of the possession of powers which they had not before employed. As the cold autumn wind scatters winged seeds far and wide, so Lord Curzon's administration spread the seeds of a national sentiment, and there is more life in India to-day, and therefore more hope, than there has ever been before. So high has feeling run against the Government that there has been an attempted boycott of English made goods, and there is now a well organized movement to encourage the use of goods made in India.

INDIA AND COLONIALISM.

Let no one cite India as an argument in defence of colonialism. On the Ganges and the Indus the Briton, in spite of his many noble qualities and his large contributions to the world's advancement, has demonstrated, as many have before, man's inability to exercise with wisdom and justice, irresponsible power over helpless people. He has conferred some benefits upon India, but he has extorted a tremendous price for them.

While he has boasted of bringing peace to the living he has led millions to the peace of the grave; while he has dwelt upon order established between warring troops he has impoverished the country by legalized pillage. Pillage is a strong word, but no refinement of language can purge the present system of its iniquity.

How long will it be before the quickened conscience of England's Christian people will heed the petition that swells up from fettered India and apply to Briton's greatest colony the doctrines of human brotherhood that have given to the Anglo-Saxon race the prestige that it enjoys?

EARL OF MINTO. SIR ANDREW FRAZER.

The Poor Waltzer.

From Wiener Witzblatt.

"May I put my name down, Miss Ella, for the third quadrille?"

"Certainly, with pleasure. I shall be home by that time."

RIO'S COMING CONFERENCE.

THIRD PAN-AMERICAN COUNCIL MEETS ON JULY 21.

Expected to Be the Most Important Gathering of All—Secretary Root to Be Present Part of the Time—Collection of Debts by Gunboats One Leading Question.

WASHINGTON, June 30.—The third Pan-American conference or, to be exact, the third international American conference, is to meet at Rio de Janeiro, the capital of Brazil, on July 21. Delegates from practically all the nations of the western hemisphere will be there.

In world politics the Pan-American conferences stand next to the conferences at The Hague in importance. To Latin-America they are more important than the Hague peace gatherings. The coming conference will be far more important than the first meeting, held in Washington in 1890, or the second, held in the City of Mexico during the winter of 1901-02. The questions which will arise have a bearing on the future peace and prosperity of the countries involved, as well as, to a somewhat less extent, the world at large.

Two things give added importance to the Brazilian conference. One is that Secretary of State Elihu Root will be in Rio for a part of the time the conference is in session, and the other is that the countries participating will all be represented at the second peace conference at The Hague.

With the exception of Mexico none of the Latin-American countries has ever sent delegates to The Hague, but at the next peace conference Latin-American countries, by virtue of invitations sent to them by the Russian Government several months ago, will have a voice in the making of international law. The discussion at Rio of questions of arbitration and of the principle of the collection of debts by the gunboat method will be influenced by the fact that these matters will be taken before the Hague conference. One of the greatest desires of Latin-America is to wrest from the Hague conference a positive declaration of policy that the weaker nation has the same right to arbitration as has the strong.

Secretary Root is not going to Rio as a delegate, and except as an adviser to the American delegates he will not participate in the conference. He will be accompanied by Mrs. Root and Miss Root, and will arrive in Rio on the cruiser Charleston a day or two after the opening of the conference and will remain there twelve days.

Then the Charleston will take him south, to Buenos Ayres and Montevideo. Mr. Root will next visit coast cities on the western side of South America. He will cross the Isthmus and come home from Panama on a steamer.

In Rio Mr. Root will have an opportunity to meet the foremost citizens of South America, and in the other places he will visit he will become acquainted with officials whom he now knows only by their signatures and through their diplomatic representatives in Washington.

Secretary Root's visit to South America is something more than a pleasure trip or a compliment to the southern neighbors of the United States. It is intended as a recognition of the advanced South America. The various Governments have been preparing to entertain him ever since it was known that he would make the trip several months ago.

Mr. Root does not look upon his trip in the light of a vacation or a jaunt for pleasure. He believes that his journey will be of much benefit, both to the Latin-American Governments and to the United States, inasmuch as it will bring the nations to the south and the United States into closer contact, from which good things will probably come, even if in no more tangible form than an awakening of a spirit of commercial and political cooperation and understanding between the two continents.

Europe has been inclined to look with suspicion upon the Pan-American conferences, especially the coming one, the fear, expressed to some extent in the press of Europe, being that the United States has planned to make use of the conference for the commercial benefit of this country. This is, of course, untrue, although the United States, by showing a great interest in Latin-America and proving to the inhabitants of the various countries composing it that this country seeks only their friendship, will be benefited. Even though Mr. Root has been the foremost advocate of the third conference, he could not, in any way, control the actions of the conference, should he so desire.

The United States covets the friendship of Latin-America, and has found it difficult to obtain. This fact has been laid to ignorance, both on the part of the United States and on the part of South and Central America. Mr. Root's principal mission is to lay at least the foundation for future friendship and understanding.

The American delegation is composed of six members, a secretary, an assistant secretary and an interpreter. The chairman is William Inseo Buchanan, one of the delegates to the conference at Mexico. He was American Minister to Argentina from 1894 to 1900, and was selected by Chile and Argentina as the deciding arbitrator in a special boundary commission appointed to fix the line between the two nations. Mr. Buchanan was also the first American Minister to Panama.

The other delegates are Prof. L. S. Rowe of the University of Pennsylvania, Tulio Larrinaga, Commissioner from Porto Rico to the United States Congress; Van Leer Polk of Nashville, Tenn.; Andrew J. Montague, former Governor of Virginia, and Prof. Paul S. Reinsch of the University of Wisconsin. The secretary to the delegation is Charles Ray Dean, chief of the bureau of appointments of the State Department. H. Fletcher Neighbors is assistant secretary and Frank S. Joannini the interpreter.

Twenty-one countries received invitations to participate in the conference. They are the United States, Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uraguay, Santo Domingo, Cuba, Haiti, Ecuador and Nicaragua. Cuba comes into the conferences for the first time. One of her delegates will be Señor Quesada, Cuban Minister to the United States.

The Brazilian Government has made elaborate plans for the entertainment of the delegates. The meetings will be held in a large pavilion in Rio, but most of the delegates will live in Petropolis, a suburb of Rio, across the bay. This arrangement may prove somewhat unsatisfactory, as it takes two hours and a half to go from Rio to Petropolis and as long to return.

The official banquets, balls and other functions will be given in the building occupied by the Department of Foreign Affairs. The pavilion in which the conference will meet was built by the Brazilian Government for its display at the St. Louis exposition in 1904. It was constructed with American labor and material. After the exposition it was taken apart and sent in sections to Rio. When the conference has ended it will be utilized for large conventions and display of produce and Brazilian manufactures.

On the surface all of the plans for the conference have been completed, and apparently there is nothing to do until the first meeting is called to order by Baron Rio Branco, Brazilian Secretary of Foreign Affairs, sometimes called "the John Hay of South America"; but underneath much is being done by the various countries which are working among themselves, shaping their policies and framing agreements with other countries on various questions.

Perhaps one of the greatest questions concerns the doctrine of the collection of contractual debts by force. This doctrine is known as both the Calvo doctrine and the Drago doctrine. It was set forth, although never actually pronounced, by Carlos Calvo of Argentina, one of the greatest international lawyers and statesmen South America has ever produced. The doctrine subsequently acquired the name of Luis F. Drago, the present Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs, who at the time of the blockade of Venezuelan ports by Germany, Great Britain and Italy, issued a circular to the foreign offices of other Latin-American governments requesting their support of the Calvo doctrine.

Already there are signs of trouble concerning the discussion of this question in the conference, and it has been rumored that Señor Drago has become so dissatisfied with the programme prepared that he has refused to head the Argentine mission to Rio. The doctrine, in its simplest form, provides that no nation shall make war to collect a contractual obligation.

The topic is thus stated in the programme for the conference:

"A resolution recommending that the second peace conference at The Hague be requested to consider whether and, if at all, to what extent the use of force for the collection of public debts is admissible."

There is still dissatisfaction in respect to that part of the programme. There are several countries which will take part in the conference which do not believe that the Drago doctrine should be taken before the Hague conference to be settled by nations which are creditors of Latin-American Governments.

The subject of compulsory arbitration, which stirred up the second conference at Mexico, has been left out of the programme. The subject of arbitration, however, will have an important bearing on the conference and has, in different forms, two places on the programme.

One section of the programme provides for "a resolution affirming the adherence of the American republics to the principle of arbitration for the settlement of disputes arising between them, and expressing the hope that the republics taking part in the conference to be convened at The Hague will agree upon a general arbitration convention that can be approved and put in operation by every country." The third section of the programme provides: "A resolution recommending to the different republics the extension for the further period of five years of the Treaty of Arbitration for Pecuniary Claims agreed upon at the Mexican conference between the different republics."

The signing of the treaty of arbitration for the collection of pecuniary claims by every country represented at the Mexican conference is regarded as the greatest result of that gathering. The treaty, which has since been ratified by the Governments of the United States, Guatemala, Salvador, Peru, Honduras and Mexico, obligates those signatory to it to submit to the arbitration of The Hague all claims for pecuniary loss or damage which may be presented by their citizens and which cannot be amicably settled through diplomatic channels, when such claims are of sufficient importance to warrant the expense of arbitration.

While it was considered a triumph to secure the sanction of all nations to the convention of The Hague it was considered much more important when the conference unanimously agreed on the treaty for the arbitration of pecuniary claims; for in Latin-America most disputes involving peace and welfare arise from claims of that character. It is now believed that the conference at Rio will recommend the extension of the treaty, and it is quite likely that it will be ratified by the home Governments of other delegates than those who represent the six Governments which have already given their sanction to the treaty, thereby placing it in operation.

Among other questions which will come before the conference are the problems of more rapid communication between the different countries, involving a uniform subsidy for steamship lines; the conclusion of commercial treaties, under which there will come a discussion of reciprocity; the greatest possible dissemination of statistical and commercial information, a subject which will probably be disposed of in the adoption of plans for the broadening of the scope of the Bureau of American Republics, and "measures tending to develop and extend commercial intercourse between the republics forming the conference," this last having to do with the establishment of a uniform gold standard and the organization of an international bank.

Regarding the steamship subsidies, it is proposed that there be established a line of steamers running clear around the South American continent, not all controlled or owned by one concern, each to be subsidized by the countries where most of its traffic is, thus securing an efficient service.

Perhaps most important of all the subjects are those of quarantine and sanitation. The Mexican conference discussed the question and the result was the holding of two international sanitary conventions in Washington and one in Rio. Drafts of treaties have been made by these conventions which will be submitted at Rio.

Another interesting question concerns the customs and consular laws of the various countries. It is desired that there be some uniform regulations throughout the various countries with regard to the entry and clearance of ships and merchandise.

SILK FROM GUNCOTTON.

Frenchmen Threaten to Put the Silkworm Out of Business.

Science threatens to put the silkworm out of business. French chemists have discovered at least three distinct methods of competing with the old reliable but extremely deliberate silkworm.

Perhaps the most interesting of these is the manufacture of silk from guncotton, which also serves as a base for the most powerful of modern explosives.

The viscous fluid from which the silkworm spins his thread is chemically duplicated by a process described in the *Technical World*. The fabric thus produced is inflammable, and in order to remedy this defect it is treated with an alkali sulphide solution.

The founders of the new industry have kept in view not so much the exact reproduction of natural silk as the production of a substance which embraces its valuable properties.

Natural silk possesses to a large degree qualities of brilliancy, elasticity, strength, affinity for coloring and bleaching materials, and when handled a peculiar rustling sound, known as scroop. Perhaps the brilliancy and scroop of silk are the best known of its qualities, and it is in these two respects that artificial silk most closely resembles natural, its brilliancy being greater and its scroop slightly less.